

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1 and 14-17 have been amended herein. All of the pending claims 1 through 25 are presented below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings in the application. Please enter these claims as amended.

1. (Currently Amended) A chemical mechanical polishing (CMP) apparatus comprising:
a polishing pad having a polishing surface; and
a deformable pad attached to the polishing pad, the deformable pad comprising a plurality of laterally-isolation isolated solid supports, wherein the plurality of solid supports are devoid of entrapped cells of gas or liquid.
2. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a substrate carrier, a polishing table, a first mechanical drive assembly for placing the polishing table in motion, and a second mechanical drive assembly for placing the substrate carrier in motion.
3. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 1, wherein the deformable pad further comprises a ventral layer attached to the bottom surface of each of the plurality of solid supports.
4. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 3, further comprising a dorsal layer attached to the top surface of each of the plurality of solid supports.
5. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 1, wherein the deformable pad further comprises a dorsal layer attached to the top surface of each of the plurality of solid supports.
6. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 1, further comprising at least one of a ventral layer and a dorsal layer integrally formed with the plurality of solid supports.

7. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of solid supports comprises a first plurality of solid supports having a first shape and a second plurality of solid supports having a second shape.

8. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of solid supports comprises a first plurality of solid supports having a first size and a second plurality of solid supports having a second size.

9. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of solid supports comprises one or more elastically deformable materials.

10. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 9, wherein at least one solid support of the plurality of solid supports comprises one or more materials of varying density.

11. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 9, wherein at least one solid support of the plurality of solid supports comprises a plurality of materials, each material of the plurality of materials having a different elasticity.

12. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one solid support of the plurality of solid supports has a cross-section that varies in size in a direction normal to the polishing pad.

13. (Original) The CMP apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of solid supports are laterally spaced from each other at varying distances.

14. (Currently Amended) A method for chemical mechanical polishing (CMP) comprising:
providing a CMP apparatus selected from a group consisting of a linear polishing apparatus and a

polishing apparatus having a rotatable polishing table;
providing a deformable pad comprising a plurality of laterally isolated solid supports, wherein
the plurality of solid supports are devoid of entrapped cells of gas or liquid;
providing a polishing pad attached to the deformable pad;
providing a semiconductor substrate having a surface to be polished; and
contacting the surface to be polished ~~to~~ with the polishing pad.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein providing the deformable pad comprising ~~the~~ a plurality of solid supports comprises providing a deformable pad comprising a plurality of solid supports attached to a ventral layer.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein providing the deformable pad comprising ~~the~~ a plurality of solid supports attached to the ventral layer comprises providing a deformable pad including a plurality of solid supports attached to ventral and dorsal layers.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein providing the deformable pad comprising ~~the~~ a plurality of solid supports comprises providing a deformable pad comprising a plurality of solid supports attached to a dorsal layer.

18. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising:
integrally forming the plurality of solid supports with at least one of a ventral layer and a dorsal layer.

19. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising:
forming the plurality of solid supports with a first plurality of solid supports having a first shape
and a second plurality of solid supports having a second shape.

20. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising:
forming the plurality of solid supports with a first plurality of solid supports having a first size
and a second plurality of solid supports having a second size.

21. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising:
forming the plurality of solid supports with one or more elastically deformable materials.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, further comprising:
forming at least one solid support of the plurality of solid supports with one or more materials of
varying density.

23. (Original) The method of claim 21, further comprising:
forming at least one solid support of the plurality of solid supports with a plurality of materials,
each material of the plurality of materials having a different elasticity.

24. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising:
forming at least one solid support of the plurality of solid supports with a cross-section that
varies in size in a direction normal to the polishing pad.

25. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising:
laterally spacing the plurality of solid supports from each other at varying distances.